

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in the above-referenced application and are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

Applicants incorporate by reference the patentability arguments made in the prior response.

Applicants explained the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art, focusing in on the distinction that the testing of the contacts is also carried out by the engine control device. That is to say, the engine control device triggers the load circuits during testing and analyzes the response. In doing so, the engine control device uses both the hardware and the software that it uses for the normal triggering during normal operation as well. In the device according to the prior art relied on by the Examiner, an additional control unit is provided, which carries out the testing.


It is therefore respectfully requested that the objections and rejections be withdrawn, and that the present application issue as early as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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Att: Mr. (12/5/04) 1111

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